

Vision 21 Implementation Committee

Notes from Meeting, June 3, 2004

Accepted July 15, 2004

In Attendance: Matt Hausmann, Jennifer Page, Paul Solomon, Diane Stafford

Also present: Jenny Fallon, Dolores Keefe

Absent: Bill Hofmann, Joe Greene, Barry Winston, Tim Higgins (excused), Victoria Haase, Meg O'Brien, Sara Oaklander

1) Jennifer Page opened the meeting by reporting that Joe Greene has asked for a leave of absence from the Committee for the duration of the summer. This leaves 9 voting members, making 5 members a quorum. (Even so, we lacked a quorum; thus these are "notes" and not "minutes.")

2) Update on the activities of the Belmont Neighbors Network:

- Dolores Keefe reported that the handing out of flowers at Town Hall to couples applying for marriage licenses went well without incident.
- Their next event will be "Meet Belmont" which will be held on Tuesday August 31, 2004. It is being organized by Adine Storer and Katherine Bonfiglio and will be held in the Assembly room and the Flett room of the Library and will include a variety of organizations. Dolores Keefe will be present to register voters. There may also be representatives from the School Committee and administration. A suggestion was made that it might be useful for the School Committee to have copies of a district map for the elementary schools.
- Paul Solomon expressed his pleasure that this group has taken off and continues to pursue opportunities around Town.

3) Update on letter from Town Departments about the impact of 40B housing in the Belmont Uplands: Diane Stafford reviewed the School Committee's response to issues related to the proposed O'Neill 40B housing development. The most significant issues were: 1) cost issues cannot be estimated without an estimate of the number of school age children who might live in the proposed development; 2) Buses will be needed to transport these children, and those in the elementary grades would most likely go to the Burbank School; 3) Consideration of these additional students must be taken in the planning for the new Wellington School

4) ESCo Committee Update: Now referred to as the Facilities Energy Management Project Committee (FEMPC). Jennifer Fallon, FEMPC Chair gave the update. The timetable for this project has been slowed due to the formation of the new committee. Also, the Housing Authority is interested in trying to include their properties in the project. However, this broader scope may require a reissuance of the original RFP. The details of this remain unclear. The group will be meeting on Tuesday, June 8 with the state consultant for further discussion. It is possible that the delay in the ESCo project may pose difficulties for the High School master planning process.

- 5) Environmental Fair: October 23, High School Field House. Jennifer Fallon reported on this event. The event is to be modeled on the Lincoln Fair and the Temple Fair. Invitations will be sent to exhibitors by the end of June to finalize by mid-August. Headings of Earth, Air, Fire (Energy) and Water have been designated for purposes of organization of a large number of exhibitors. Exhibitors will include the Town Clerk for voter registration, heads of Town departments and Committees, churches, state-wide environmental groups, and some vendors. There will also be programs in the Little Theatre and preferred parking for hybrid cars.

Sponsors: Habitat, Belmont Conservation Commission, Belmont Municipal Light Department and possibly the Belmont Public School Department and the Garden Club. Organizers plan to approach local banks for fundraising.

- 6) Summer Meeting Schedule: Jennifer Page will get vacation schedules from committee members and organize a summer schedule. This may include a joint meeting of the Vision 21 Implementation Committee and the Environmental Fair Planning Committee.

- 7) The Committee then began a discussion focused on “thinking ahead”.

- a) Achievements for the last few years were reviewed by various members. These included:

- PICPG: (Public Information and Community Planning Group) This group made recommendations to the Board of Selectmen after community input. The discrete mandate of this group made their task much easier.

- BEDPG: This group has faced diverse issues concerning the Belmont business community. Hard work is being done to integrate the business community.

- b) The problem of “burn out” among committee members who are frequently involved in multiple projects was raised:

- Paul Solomon asked what Arlington’s experience has been with their Vision 2020 process. They have a larger community from which to draw. All agreed that sustainability was an issue in the longer term.

- Jennifer Page discussed the role of the Vision Implementation Committee in the work of other committees that form as a result of the work of the Committee. She supported the idea, following the Arlington model, that groups may form spontaneously and then their leaders become part of the Vision Committee. Currently in Belmont, we tend to have appointed members who then form groups. This means that the same people are involved in multiple tasks and at risk for “burn out”.

- c) Several models for Committee interaction were proposed: 1) Leadership and active implementation model; 2) Liaison model; 3) Either actively recruiting or inviting those involved in activities/committees to join the Committee. Examples of all of these models can be found in the history of the Committee’s interactions.

- d) Jennifer Page felt that one of the main goals of the Committee must continue to be the affirmation of the importance of the various parts of the Vision statement to the town.

- e) Jennifer also felt that the Committee needs to ensure community outreach and input from town into various Town committees. We must serve as a “bridge between activities of the Town departments and citizens” with communication in both directions.

This will allow the Town departments to show citizens what they are doing. We must “provide a platform” of this interaction.

f) Public outreach: As the vision is implemented, the charge of the committee must be to insure that there is continued community outreach via forums, etc. As this outreach is the main job of the committee, how do we insure that we continue to be effective.

g) Question: How do we encourage leadership in the community outside of the Vision Committee itself?

h) Suggested change to the current format of the Committee: The Vision Committee remains an appointed body. However, the committee would then have the ability to appoint other people to committee, such as the head of planning groups.

i) The original mandate of the Committee was for its members to “convene” new groups, but not to lead them.

j) What do we offer to groups: 1) sponsorship of public meetings; 2) outreach to Town departments.

A more detailed discussion ensued about the future role of the Vision Implementation Committee and its relationship to other community groups.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Stafford, M.D.